

Lahmacun or Lama B'ajin or Meat Pizzas

Dough:

2 tablespoons instant dry yeast (make sure it's fresh!)
1 kilo (7.5-8 cups) 00 or pizza/focaccia flour but you can use AP flour too
1 tablespoon sugar
1 tablespoon salt
600 ml (2.5 cups) warm water
60 grams (1/4 cup + 1 tablespoon) olive oil
Spray oil or regular oil to coat dough (if using mixer)

Meat topping:

1 kilo (2.2 pounds) of chopped meat
1 small to medium onion peeled chopped and sautéed in olive oil till light brown
3-4 tablespoons tomato paste or 100 grams
2-3 tablespoons tamarind syrup *or* pomegranate molasses
1/4 cup or small bunch finely chopped parsley
Salt and pepper to taste
a few pine nuts for garnish (optional)

Prepare the dough in a bread machine or a mixer. In the bread machine on the kneading cycle, put the yeast and sugar in first and put flour on top of that and only then add the salt (don't let it touch the yeast, it retards yeast growth) let it stir it together then dribble in the oil and water till a ball is formed. If preparing in a mixer, use the beater and mix the dry ingredients together as above, then put the oil and water in and flick on and off just till mixed, switch to a dough hook and knead till a smooth ball is formed. Spray top with spray oil or regular oil, cover right in bowl and let rise till doubled in bulk. In bread machine, let it finish the kneading cycle and leave closed to rise in the warmth of the machine till doubled.

While dough rises, prepare meat mixture by combining chopped meat, sauteed onion, tomato paste, tamarind syrup and finely chopped parsley with salt and pepper. Set aside till dough is ready.

Preheat oven to 425 F/220 C.

Deflate the dough and take a pinch of dough the size of a golf ball (I weighed them between 35-40 grams but you can make them bigger or smaller) and on a piece of parchment paper or pastry mat, flatten dough balls into rounds. Take a generous heaping tablespoon of meat mixture and cover tops of rounds of dough till the edges, using up all the dough and all the meat mixture. Do NOT let rise again but immediately place in hot oven for 10 -12 minutes or until light brown on the bottom and the meat topping is fully cooked